



## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

**[FRL-9924-35-OGC]**

### **Proposed Consent Decree, Clean Air Act Citizen Suit**

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed consent decree; request for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with section 113(g) of the Clean Air Act, as amended ("CAA" or the "Act"), notice is hereby given of a proposed consent decree to address a lawsuit filed by Sierra Club: Sierra Club v. McCarthy, No. 4:14-cv-00643-JLH (E.D. AK). In 2012, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a rule partially disapproving a revision to a state implementation plan (SIP) submitted by Arkansas to address the requirements of the regional haze program. EPA also at the same time partially disapproved that portion of the Arkansas SIP submittal addressing the interstate transport visibility requirements associated with the promulgation of the 1997 national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for ozone and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). In its lawsuit, Sierra Club alleged that EPA has failed to meet the requirement of the Clean Air Act that the Agency promulgate a federal implementation plan (FIP) within two years of partially disapproving a SIP, in whole or in part. The proposed consent decree establishes proposed and final deadlines for EPA to take action to meet its obligations with respect to Arkansas.

**DATES:** Written comments on the proposed consent decree must be received by

**[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].**

**ADDRESSES:** Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID number EPA-HQ-OGC-2015-0162, online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (EPA's preferred method); by e-mail to [oei.docket@epa.gov](mailto:oei.docket@epa.gov); by mail to EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mailcode: 2822T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460-0001; or by hand delivery or courier to EPA Docket Center, EPA West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. Comments on a disk or CD-ROM should be formatted in Word or ASCII file, avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption, and may be mailed to the mailing address above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** M. Lea Anderson, Air and Radiation Law Office (2344A), Office of General Counsel, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460; telephone: (202) 564-5571; fax number (202) 564-5603; email address: [anderson.lea@epa.gov](mailto:anderson.lea@epa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Additional information about the proposed consent decree.**

On October 17, 2011, EPA proposed to partially approve and to partially disapprove a revision to the Arkansas SIP intended to address the regional haze requirements of the Clean Air Act. 76 F R 64186. In that same action, EPA also proposed to partially disapprove the portion of the Arkansas' interstate transport SIP submittal addressing the visibility requirement of section 110(a)(2)(D)(i)(II) of the Clean Air Act for the 1997 ozone NAAQS and the 1997 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. On March 12, 2012, EPA finalized its partial approval and disapproval of the Arkansas Regional Haze and Interstate Transport SIP submittals. 77 F R 14604. When EPA disapproves a SIP submission in whole or in

part, section 110(c) of the Act requires EPA to promulgate a FIP within two years unless the State corrects the deficiency and EPA approves the plan revision. Sierra Club filed a complaint in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California in August 2014 alleging that EPA had failed to promulgate a FIP for Arkansas as required by the Clean Air Act. That case was transferred to the United State District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas in October 2014.

The proposed consent decree would resolve the lawsuit filed by the Sierra Club by establishing that EPA must take proposed action by March 16, 2015 and final action by December 15, 2015 to address the deficiencies in the Arkansas SIP that were identified by EPA in its March 12, 2012 action. See the proposed consent decree for the specific details.

For a period of thirty (30) days following the date of publication of this notice, the Agency will accept written comments relating to the proposed consent decree from persons who were not named as parties or intervenors to the litigation in question. EPA or the Department of Justice may withdraw or withhold consent to the proposed consent decree if the comments disclose facts or considerations that indicate that such consent is inappropriate, improper, inadequate, or inconsistent with the requirements of the Act. Unless EPA or the Department of Justice determines that consent to this consent decree should be withdrawn, the terms of the decree will be affirmed.

## **II. Additional information about commenting on the proposed consent decree.**

*A. How Can I Get A Copy Of the Consent Decree?*

The official public docket for this action (identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OGC-2015-0162) contains a copy of the proposed consent decree. The official public docket is available for public viewing at the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket in the EPA Docket Center, EPA West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is (202) 566-1744, and the telephone number for the OEI Docket is (202) 566-1752.

An electronic version of the public docket is available through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). You may use [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) to submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the official public docket, and to access those documents in the public docket that are available electronically. Once in the system, key in the appropriate docket identification number then select “search”.

It is important to note that EPA’s policy is that public comments, whether submitted electronically or in paper, will be made available for public viewing online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change, unless the comment contains copyrighted material, CBI, or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Information claimed as CBI and other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute is not included in the official public docket or in the electronic public docket. EPA’s policy is that copyrighted material, including copyrighted material contained in a public comment, will not be placed in EPA’s electronic public docket but will be available only in printed,

paper form in the official public docket. Although not all docket materials may be available electronically, you may still access any of the publicly available docket materials through the EPA Docket Center.

*B. How and To Whom Do I Submit Comments?*

You may submit comments as provided in the **ADDRESSES** section. Please ensure that your comments are submitted within the specified comment period. Comments received after the close of the comment period will be marked “late.” EPA is not required to consider these late comments.

If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name, mailing address, and an e-mail address or other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD ROM you submit. This ensures that you can be identified as the submitter of the comment and allows EPA to contact you in case EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties or needs further information on the substance of your comment. Any identifying or contact information provided in the body of a comment will be included as part of the comment that is placed in the official public docket, and made available in EPA’s electronic public docket. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment.

Use of the [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) website to submit comments to EPA electronically is EPA’s preferred method for receiving comments. The electronic public docket system is an “anonymous access” system, which means EPA will not know your identity, e-mail address, or other contact information unless you provide it in the body of

your comment. In contrast to EPA's electronic public docket, EPA's electronic mail (e-mail) system is not an "anonymous access" system. If you send an e-mail comment directly to the Docket without going through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), your e-mail address is automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the official public docket, and made available in EPA's electronic public docket.

Dated: March 12, 2015.

**Lorie J. Schmidt,**

*Associate General Counsel.*

[FR Doc. 2015-06508 Filed: 3/19/2015 08:45 am; Publication Date: 3/20/2015]